

ENTER THE BUSH

A Dogon Mask Festival

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MAY 18, 1989: As the steep Bandiagara cliff casts its shadow over the village of Amani, the men of neighboring Tireli gather at the roadside to thank their hosts for the splendid mask festival. It has been a good time, this *dama* in Amani: the masks were beautiful and performed well, the visitors were received with honor, and beer was plentiful. Yédyè Pudyugo, the ritual speaker of Amani, leads the Tireli delegation to a deserted compound, where four huge jars of millet beer are waiting for them. The men gather around the brew and quietly down the eighty-odd liters of beer. Glancing at Yédyè, Mananu, leader of the men from Tireli, taps his iron ring against a bell and starts singing: "Thank you for the beer, you who stood over there, poured out, and we drank, thank you." His clan brother Amaga follows with the second verse: "Thanks for Tepènyo [an ancestor of Amani], God has done well to the first settler here; you are sons of the same father, you will understand us." "May God help you," sings Mananu, "help the ones who work the millet, may the rich God help you; as brothers, you understand our words." Answering in proper fashion, after the many repetitions of the song, Yédyè launches into a long greeting, thanking his guests in the ritual mask language (*sigi so*): "What you said does not come from a child, it is truly the word of the old ones. When you came here, not even a dog could bark at you, no stone could offend

your foot. Compared to you I am but a youngster, and we did not honor you enough; many men and women have come to look at our masks; you are the children of God, going back home no thorn will touch your feet." In return, the men from Tireli thank their host for his graceful reception of their thank you song, then finally gather their belongings and leave the dancing grounds where they have spent most of the last four days. It has been a good *dama*, and Amani can be sure of a good year with an abundant harvest. Next year in Tireli, perhaps!

Masks and Mask Festivals

The Dogon of Mali love their mask dances; nothing excites them as much. Whenever a *dama* is held, hundreds of people from the neighboring villages flock to the dancing grounds to watch the masks, comment on the dancers, perform where needed, and applaud the performance as a whole. They compare it assiduously with their own festival, their own masks, their own dances, taking a fierce chauvinistic pride in their home variant of the feast. The Dogon mask festivals have also drawn much attention from academics and tourists. From the first explorers (Desplagnes 1907) to the first major description by Griaule (1938) to the recent publications of Dieterlen (1989, 1990), this complex has been the object of intricate description and elaborate speculation.

Before following a mask festival like Amani's through its course,



and venturing into our own interpretation of it, let us first define what the Dogon mean by *èmna*, the word we translate as "mask." That word suggests above all a covering that disguises the head. Tourists, art dealers, and museum curators routinely call Dogon head coverings "masks." For the Dogon themselves, however, the notion of *èmna* includes the whole person dancing in a costume of which the headpiece is just one part. Masks are not worn; masks dance, perform, and shout. The total outfit comprises red and black fibers for skirts and arm adornments, a pair of very wide Dogon trousers, a headpiece attached by cotton bands, and various paraphernalia belonging to that particular costume—a dancing stick, or a rattle, or a dancing ax (fig. 1). The essential element in this ensemble is the fiber, made from the hibiscus plant and dyed a fiery red. These fibers share the name *èmna*; sometimes a few are tied on a stick and are used to prohibit women

from approaching a waterhole, and these too are called *èmna*. The headpiece, though important, may change from one performance to another; in fact it is the fibers that define the outfit as a mask, and the headpiece that indicates which particular mask is in play.

The mask ritual has several parts. Though their details vary greatly from village to village, the following elements are common:

1. There is a period in which the masks are made and the village drums repaired, which lasts at least a month. During these weeks, the boys to be initiated roam the village at dusk in the *èmna bèdyè* (pupil mask).
2. A number of ritual entries are made into the village. The masks come from the bush and enter from various directions. This, in my view, is the crucial ritual element of the mask festival.
3. In a series of public dances, the masks perform at various

Fig. 1. Mask performance during a funeral. Mask rituals are a part of the complex of Dogon ceremonies connected with death. Funerals, held once each year, are elaborate four-day-long ceremonies with dancing, singing, and mock combats involving the shooting of Dogon-made flintlock guns. The high point, in the case of the death of an elder, is a performance of a dozen masks at the main dancing ground of the village, after which all the men, old as well as very young, join in a final dance. This appearance of the masks in the first funeral (the mask festival, the *dama*, being the second funeral) can be interpreted both as a first farewell to those who "commanded" the masks, and as a first contact of the dead with the bush, their future abode. All photos: Walter E.A. van Beek.



Fig. 2. The carving of a mask. The young men participating in a *dama* for the first time must carve or plait their own masks, including the headpiece. They must grow hibiscus for its essential fibers, buy the beads and the cowrie shells, and cut trees for the wooden headpieces. Some masks, such as the "healer," with its four human figurines, demand intricate carving; others, like the "tree," which is five meters long, are difficult to construct. These may be carved by a specialist, usually a blacksmith. As wood is scarce, permission to cut it must be asked both of the elders of the village and, on behalf of the whole village, of the "Eaux et Forêts," an institution of the Malian government. For the *dama* this permission is always granted.

places in the village.

4. Rituals of segregation follow, in which those who have died since the last *dama* are given their final farewell, and the masks themselves take their leave.

The *Dama* of Amani: Preparation for the Ritual

After the good harvest of 1988, the grandsons of the fourteen men who were central in the last *dama*, thirteen years earlier, come together and decide that a new *dama* can be held. After asking permission of the fourteen oldest men now living, they start the preparations. Thirteen years is about the standard time between *dama* for the villages at the foot of the cliff. In fact, many men in Amani have anticipated the festival, and have already cultivated a fair amount of sesame, one of its necessities. Word gets out to the people of Amani origin living in the plains and even in Côte d'Ivoire.

The young men who are to perform in this *dama* for the first time prepare huge quantities of hibiscus fibers. Then they start on their masks, carving or plaiting headpieces, drying and dyeing their fibers, collecting cowrie shells and beads for the decorations, and ar-

ranging the long Dogon trousers that belong to any mask outfit. Most of the masks are made by the dancers themselves (fig. 2), though certain renowned carvers and blacksmiths may work on request. All the dancers make more than one mask, as they all have to wear the *bèdyè* mask during the event's opening sequences; each carves or plaits several headpieces more, in order to change roles in different dances. The choice is up to the individual, guided by age and personal preference. Young boys often choose the small hare or rabbit mask (*èmna goû*), which is easy to dance, and perform in a group. Some masks are tricky to dance, like the shaman's (*èmna binu*), as the dancer must enact a possession during the dance, and runs the risk of actually being possessed. The most popular mask is the *kanaga*, the stork, the most famous of all Dogon masks, often referred to as the "*croix de Lorraine*." Other popular ones are the *èmna tiû*, the tree or "big house" mask, and the *tingetange* or stilt mask.

As fabrication continues, the period starts called *yange èmna*, or fire masks. At night, the young men who are to perform their first *dama* gather at the village perimeter and, accompanying themselves on the slit drum, practice their dancing. Fire is taboo here, and any man passing by is forbidden to carry a flame. No one may talk to the dancers, except in the case of a death. During this period, which may last a fortnight or so, the women of Amani are not allowed to leave or enter the village at night, as they would risk seeing the masks "naked," without head coverings. If women cross the village borders in the dark, the masks, adorned with just a few fibers over their trousers, accost them and make them pay, also fining their husbands. Tales abound of women from foreign villages being slaughtered by masks when they enter the village territory. To avoid these prowlers, women hurry home; after the market in neighboring Tireli, the women

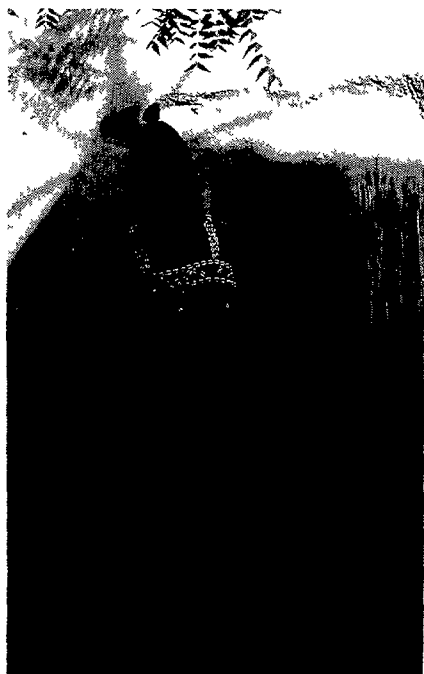


Fig. 3. Bedyè, the pupil mask. All the dancers must make this mask, which is probably the oldest form, a simple plaited head covering, yet is the most crucial in the festival. It symbolizes the fact that men must be initiated into the use of masks, into the ways of the bush, to gain knowledge and power. The *bedyè* masks are the first to appear in the festival, emerging from the bush even before the *dama* is fully underway. As "pupils," the young men learn to make the masks and, in the month preceding the main rituals, gather at evening clothed as *bedyè* to practice the dances, to beat their slit drums, and to scare off women. The masks may also be spotted by day, roaming the village to greet the elders and to reconnoiter the ritual places.

of Amani are the first to leave, whether they have sold their merchandise or not. In earlier times, in fact, no work was done at all during this period. But times have changed, and the commerce in onions continues during the day. The nights, however, are used for dancing.

At the crack of dawn at the end of *yange èmna*, the dancers and many of the older men leave the village, heading for a pond in the dunes to the northeast.¹ There they spend most of the day, drinking beer brought to them by the *yasigine*, the "sisters of the masks," who also fetch them water. In the village the women and the remaining men gather bowls of mush and oil of sesame and fill the beer jars standing at the meeting places. Around four in the afternoon the masks emerge from the bush in a long single file. All of them are *èmna*, though the older men, who walk first in the line, wear fibers only around the waist. They also sport indigo trousers, and plaited headpieces worn loosely on their heads. The new *èmna*, the younger men, close up the rear, wearing white trousers without fibers. Each carries a short stick and a thorn branch in his hands. Twice, at places identified by the older men, the whole line kneels, while Yédyè shouts from afar his greetings in *sigi so*, the mask language:

God has seen you, has seen a good thing. Something big is there, something small, if anything is wrong, it is with God. This is not work for children. If you see a woman, beat her. Greeting, good heads, who came running, all the women are afraid, beat them.

After the second greeting the masks shout their high-pitched cry, "hé, hé, hé," and disperse to the various places where beer and food are stored. The young ones swarm out into the village, chasing those few girls who have not yet hidden themselves away, and search out houses where there has been a death since the last *dama*, signaled by a reed mat in the entrance. There they beat their sticks

against the doorpost and throw stones into the yard, demanding their share of beer. Beer has been brewed in other compounds as well. Few people from other villages are present, as most fear to enter Amani on this day, which through its "blackness" is dangerous for them.

Though the masks have entered the village, they are still seen as "naked." The preparation period intensifies as the young men put their costumes and headpieces in order. Though beer drinking continues through the weeks that follow, it is on a smaller scale, for much work is still to be done. Besides finishing the masks, the young men make new drums, hollowing out the trunks of trees. The old men of the village prepare the skins to cover them. In the afternoons, some of the young men don their *bedyè* masks, plaited fiber hoods, the simplest of all head coverings (fig. 3). In full adornment they roam the village, where they ask for beer in the compounds.

These activities last another four Dogon weeks (of five days) or so, or whatever time is needed for the dancers to carve and plait the rest of their masks.

Descent from the Scree

The final preparations are made over a period of four days. In a complex ritual involving one mask, the elders plant the *dani*, the dancing pole, and build an altar at the heart of Buguru, the dancing grounds. After some individual forays into the village, the masks finally gather on May 15 on the scree several hundred feet above the village. The drums are beaten to warn women and children not to approach the masks, who spend the day preparing themselves. Finally, when the sun disappears behind the cliff in the late afternoon, the masks emerge, the old men leading them down the paths to Buguru. At one point the traditional trail downward passes through a compound that somebody has built on it since the last *dama*. And since many years have elapsed since that festival, the

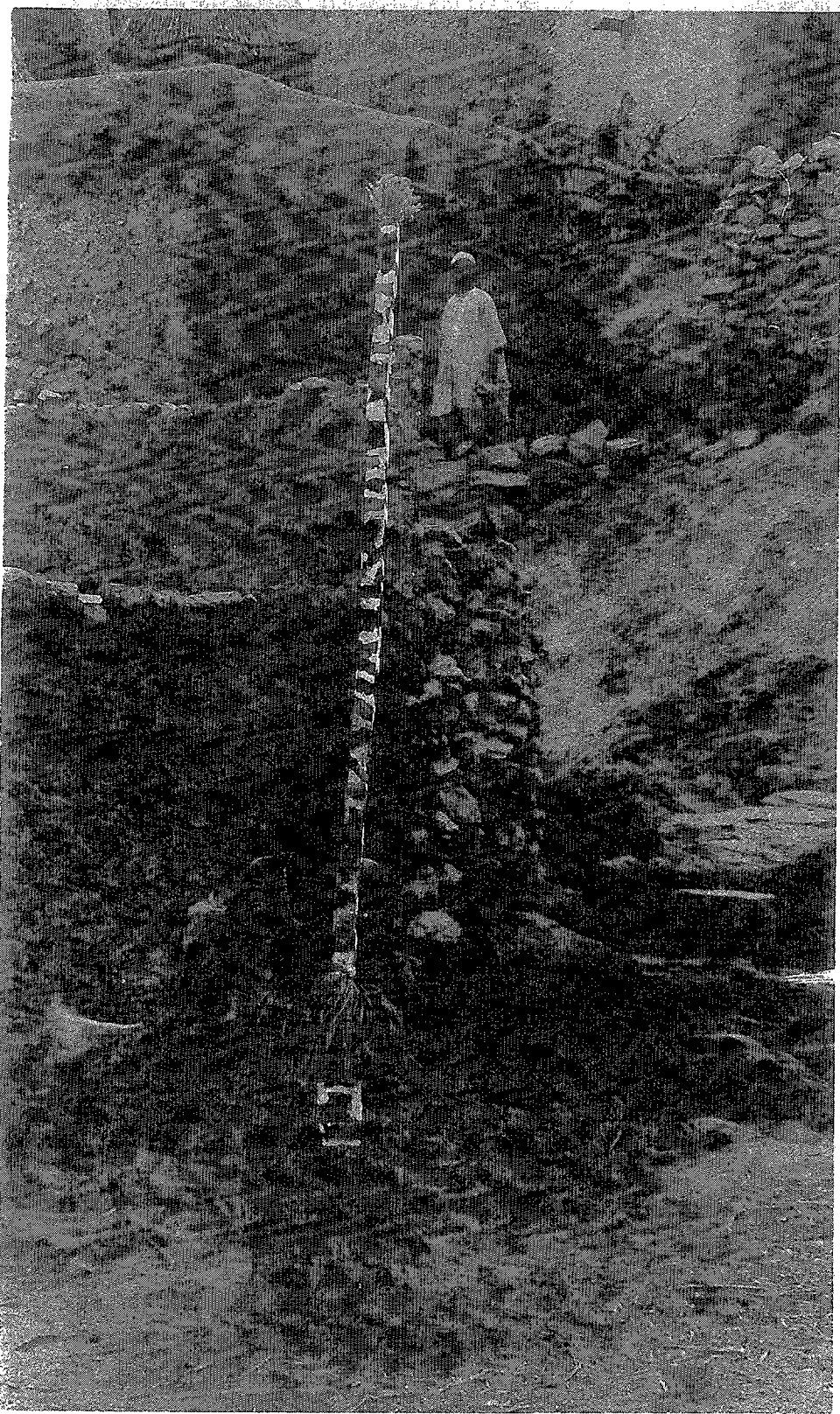


Fig. 4. The arrival of the *agamagâ*, the grand mask. The original mask, found in mythical times by people in the northeastern village of Yougo, is represented in several ways. One of them is the *dani*, the dancing pole, erected at the main dancing ground (see also fig. 9); a second is the *émna na*, a bull-roarer swung at night whose sound is the voice of the mask. In

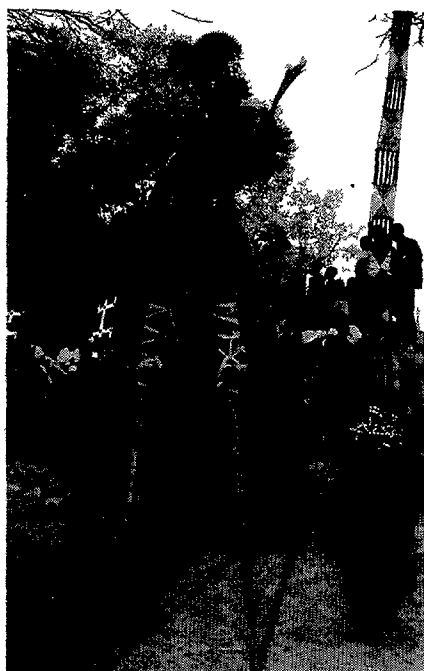
many villages, Amani amongst them, a third representation is by a long mask of the "tree" type, called the *agamagâ*. This mask, as shown in the illustration, is never worn on the head, but is carried around and shown to the dancers during the festival. For the rest of the time it is kept in one of the many crevasses of the village scree and guarded by the elders.

exact route to be followed has become a little hazy; the old men engage in heated discussion as to whether a particular stone should be passed to the right or to the left.

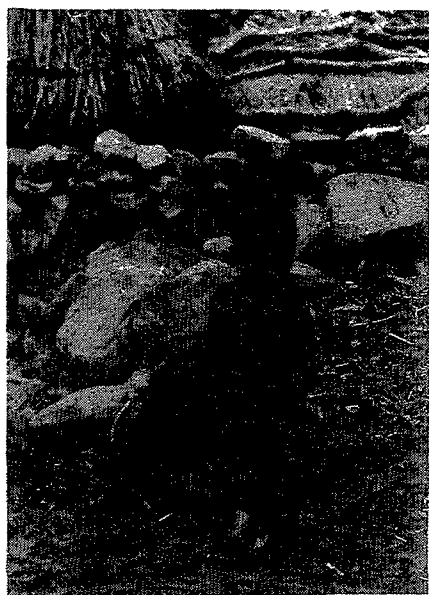
Finally the masks arrive at the dancing place for the first public performance. The drums, which have been brought straight to Buguru, start calling masks and spectators, while from the dancing grounds old men shout exhortations into the village. The old guides, dressed in sloppy *bedyé* masks, emerge first, followed by the masks proper. Two *waru* (antelope) masks, the keepers of law and order, open the file, followed by six *tingetange*, two *sadimbe* (sisters of the masks), one *odyogoro* (goiter), one *tâ* (door), four *modibo* (Muslim officials), twenty-two *kanaga*, and four *tiû*. The last elder to emerge carries the *agamagâ*, the grand mask (fig. 4). A real sister of the masks, a *yasigine* (as opposed to a *sadimbe* mask), walks between the last men in the line.

It is still a time of high taboo: women, children, and strangers remain at a distance. Only the men of Amani are allowed on the spot. The atmosphere is one of both serious business and easy camaraderie. The dancers are guided meticulously in the proper way around the *dani* and altar, counterclockwise, but this first day, performances are somewhat disorganized, neither the dancers nor the leading elders being fully secure about the "old ways" they are supposed to follow. Women being absent, there is no real need to hide the identity of the dancers; after their performance they shove their masks to the back of their heads to get some fresh air, and to see better. When a mask is damaged, as the *kanaga* sometimes is when touching the ground in the vigorous dancing, helpers repair it without fuss, in view of everyone. If women were present, this would be done behind the rocks or a tree.

The first to dance, to the sound of the drums and bells, are the *tingetange*, the stilts, as these masks are difficult and tricky to use, and dan-



Figs. 5 and 6. Stilt mask, with "tree" or "big house" mask. Among the many types of masks, these two are the most spectacular and the most difficult to dance. Practice for the stilt mask starts at a tender age (fig. 6). The mask represents a waterbird, but its body gear adorns the wearer as a Dogon girl with a cowrie-decorated skirt, jutting breasts, a small money box, a horse's tail, and the elaborate hairdo that girls used to wear at the festivals. The masks tie on their stilts against a house near the dancing grounds, and perform before all the other masks. After their dance, they entrust their stilts to their kinsmen and join the troupe as "girls."



gerous when the dancers are tired. The *tingetange* dance slightly apart from Buguru, at a small flat place close to the scree where a building enables them to tie on their stilts. Their long legs aside, they are adorned like either Dogon or Bambara girls, their plaited headpieces covered with cowrie shells, beads, little mirrors, and strips of metal; and their bodices a rich display of beads and shells around jutting breasts made of baobab fruits. The stilts dance as a group, admired by all, as theirs is the most difficult technique. Years of solo practice in the bush precede this display of expertise; the dancers have worked up from little stumps while still children (figs. 5 and 6) to ever greater heights. The mask as a whole represents a waterbird (probably *Himanthopus himanthopus*), and the dance mimics the bird's characteristic jutting head movements. Shaking little money boxes and horsetails in their hands, the stilts trot along the square, while the elders shout encouragement in *sigi so*: "Greetings, God and masks, forgive us, it is your work, your work from the cavern. It is very good for the elders, people have come to see you dance, it is your work, up to you." As they shout they pound sticks on the ground before the approaching stilts. When through with dancing, the masks sit down in the little Christian chapel built next to the dancing place, untie their stilts, hand them over to the custody of a kinsman, and join the rest of the masks, keeping on their costumes as girls.

The elders have introduced the masks to the *dani* and to the altar by circling around them three times, then leaving the floor. First to appear at Buguru itself is the main body of masks, the *kanaga*, a long row of wooden crosses dancing more or less in unison. The other masks follow behind them. All the masks initially dance together, circling the spot three times, all joining in the same routines. Then they perform in smaller groups. The *kanaga* go first: three or four at a time, each

goes through a vigorous choreography in which he dips his head, draws back, then circles his cross to the right, touching the ground with its tip (fig. 7). Much shouting accompanies this exercise, the spectators praising the good performers, throwing boos and laughter at the poor ones. The long line of *kanaga* takes quite a time to perform, as each mask tries to remain on stage as long as possible. Some have to be shoved off by an elder to make place for the next.

Then the other masks get their share of attention. The spectacular *tiû*, four to five meters high, move in together like a walking thicket of trees. Like all wooden headpieces, this huge one, representing both a tree and a clan house, not only rests on the dancer's head but is tied to his waist with strips of cloth through a mesh of cords at the back. To maneuver, the dancer bites on a grip inside the headpiece. It takes good teeth as well as a strong neck to dance this mask, as the huge contraption has to move vigorously. Swaying the tree to and fro, each time touching the ground, and whirling it around horizontally, the dancer shows himself a real *sagatara*, a strong young man, eliciting shouts of praise from the bystanders, who keep at a safe distance (fig. 8). One of the performers fails in raising his mask from the ground and is booed away, while the spectators chatter about who he is, and why he lacks strength.

When the trees are finished, the other masks follow, in no particular order, though the older men precede the younger ones. This year Amani has quite a few *modibo* masks, representing Muslim teachers (marabouts); long colored hair on the plaited hood is the main characteristic. Next up is a *sadimbe*, a mask featuring a female statue fully adorned as a sister of the masks, and representing the mythical first woman who found the *èmna*. Behind it comes a *tâ* door mask, representing the Dogon granary doors. This is a new type of mask that most people have never seen be-

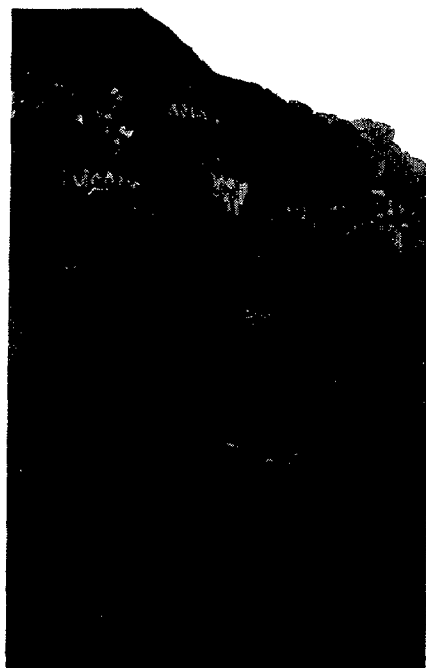


Fig. 7. A group of *kanaga* dancing. The *kanaga* mask is by far the most popular of all, and has come to represent Dogon masks all over the world. Its original meaning—a large white bird, probably a stork—has become somewhat blurred, not least by the dubious interpretations of early Dogon researchers. The *kanaga* is easy to carve (see fig. 2), not too hard to dance, and still allows for individual performance and a show of excellence in dancing. It should be danced by youngsters of about twenty years of age, who are trying to marry, and for whom an attentive mass of admiring girls is most important, even if they have to keep a respectful distance.

fore. The masks representing girls—*tingetange* who have shed their stilts—then follow with their dance, accompanied by the two *waru* masks representing the oryx gazelle (*Oryx dammah*, or *O. gazella*).² These latter are by far the most active masks: their task is to keep order in the proceedings, moving the spectators to the edge of the dancing ground, and chasing off women, girls, and small boys. The *waru* is the real performer among the masks, danced by the most imaginative of the dancers, interacting constantly with the crowd. Moving between masks and audience, they may greet oncoming strangers by running up to them to test out their knowledge of *sigi so* greetings. A good *waru* mask is essential for a good show, though it is sometimes assisted or even replaced by a monkey mask. But there is no monkey mask here at Amani and the burden falls on two *waru*, who dance quite well despite the scorching heat of the late May afternoon.

A few more masks are present too, not as popular as the others, but interesting all the same. One is the *odyogoro*, the goiter, wearing a carved headpiece with a huge protuberance under its chin. Goiters are common here, and the mask draws gusts of laughter from the crowd as it prances around, hacking away with an adze in midair, unable to bend down to the ground. More laughs are drawn by the *pulo* mask, representing a Fulani man with his horse. Several types of the *pulo* are possible; this one is a quite simple plaited hood of *bèdyè* type, and the focus is on the stick horse that he almost manages to fall off while dancing. At the end of the long row, an elder carries the *agamagâ*. Ritually the most important mask of all, it represents the first mask, and is never worn, just carried around. When the dance is over, it will be brought back to the village. After the first round of dancing, the masks all crouch near the *dan*i and the altar to be thanked and blessed by the village speaker (fig. 9).

At dusk, the masks end their per-

formance. All have been on stage several times now, and both dancers and drummers have grown tired. One tree mask wants to continue after the leading drummer has already stopped. "You are tired, you know," shouts the drummer; the mask, who never speaks, denies it, shaking his head, but has to stop anyway. It is the end of the day. Slowly the masks mount into the village, an occasional drum beating.

Second Entry: Descent from the Plains

Before sunrise the next morning—May 16, 1989—all the neophytes gather at the foot of the cliff to hear the oldest man of the village pronounce his blessings over them.

Crouching under the overhang of a huge boulder, clothed only in white Dogon shorts, they intersperse his long well-wishings and admonitions in *sigi so* with occasional mask cries, the high-pitched "hé, hé, hé" that is the only sound masks may utter. When the old man is finished they eat and dress for dancing, in long indigo trousers, necklaces and other jewelry, cotton bands for tying on the mask, and the tobacco-tinted cap each wears under the headpiece. In their hands they carry swords or horsetails. The rest of the morning is spent in what the dancers themselves consider a high point of the festival, a dancing contest without the mask disguises. Guided by the elders, they circle the largest *tei* (public square) of the village three times, then crouch in a large circle. An elder gives a long public praise, with wise, frequently modest remarks ("Pardon, pardon, you are the ones who do the work"). Often the young men rise up, shout their mask cry, wave their horsetails, then settle down again. The rest of the morning is spent in the various dancing grounds of the wards, the young men taking turns in the various mask dances, to the delight of the villagers, to decide who is the best dancer. At noon the drums are silenced, the dancers drink their inevitable beer, and the crowd disperses, having come to a general consensus as to who is now the top

dancer of the village.

This day is called *manugosugo*, "descent from the plains," and the afternoon program is definitely the highlight of the festival. The sequence of dances is similar to the last series of the day before, but with one large difference: today people from the neighboring villages will be present. Beer and water have been brought to the dunes, where, in the early afternoon, the men join their younger brothers, who have guarded their masks and belongings.

In the neighbouring villages of Tireli and Yaye, people prepare themselves for their part in the proceedings. Women finish brewing beer, men don their finest clothes, and late in the afternoon they set out toward Amani. Reaching the village, the women disperse to present the beer to their own and their husbands' friends, while the men fan into the dunes, where the dancers are busy clothing themselves. The scree is already in the shadow of the cliff when the first drums start calling the masks. First the *tingetange* start moving, walking at ease toward Buguru, with their masks at the back of their heads, their faces bared, while young brothers amble alongside them carrying

their stilts. Accompanied by drums, the main body of masks then sets out in one group. Their northeastern flank is shielded by the men from Yaye, while at their southwest side the men from Tireli form an accompanying file. The rationale of this arrangement is indeed protection: the two neighboring villages shield the masks from the envying stares of villages farther away, so that, informants state, no foreigners can assess Amani's strength.³

The whole troupe—two *bèdyè*, four "girls," two *modibo*, five trees, and twenty-two *kanaga*—move as a body; nobody may interrupt their procession, nor cross their lines. Only a *waru* walks outside the group, chasing away outsiders (fig. 10). Now the masks are all fully "clothed," their adornment complete and their headpieces in place. This is the last and the greatest arrival of the masks, and it is done in style. No one discusses the trail, or argues about priorities; everything has been settled by this time. Led by the elders, flanked by the neighbors, and admired by the visitors from other villages, the forty-five masks dance their way into the area round the altar and the *dani*, drums and bells accompanying them. Again the stilts are the first to per-



Fig. 8. A *sagatara*, a "strong young man," performing with a "tree" or "big house" mask. The headpiece, made of planks of light wood lashed together, is not particularly intricate to carve, but is hard to construct. Like all wooden masks, it is maneuvered with an interior grip for the teeth. Long, heavy, and cumbersome, it requires a strong neck and a solid jaw: the dancer must swing the headpiece to and fro in sweeping circles, offering the *sagatara* a chance to show themselves off. As all the men are readily recognized, the solo performance of a tree mask puts the dancer at the center of attention. The mask's other name, "big house," refers to the clan houses that form the center of the Dogon villages.

form, nine of them today. Like a flock of gigantic waterbirds they come stepping from the low building where they have tied on their stilts, rattling their boxes and waving their wands. Afterward, since they will perform several times today, they rest against a tree near the grounds, watching the next section dance. As before, the *kanaga* dominate, and all of them have to perform. The one *waru* is very busy, roaming the perimeter of the dance to keep women and children, non-initiates, at a distance. A throng of male spectators circles the ground, about half of them from other villages. This is when Amani is judged as a whole for its mask performance. Up to now, the strangers from other villages have not been overly impressed with the dancing and the organization, but today it is for real. The *dama* is "complete" now, fully clothed and adorned, fully danced. From faraway rooftops in the village, the women and girls follow the performance. Small boys creep through the spectators, to be chased away by the very active *waru*. The elders and the *orubaru*, the officiator from another Dogon ritual, the *sigi*, continually shout in *sigi so*, beating their sticks on the ground to stimulate and honor the dancing.

At dusk the dancing halts, the drums are silenced, and the masks and spectators repair to the village. At the deserted dancing ground the old men who are in charge of the masks engage in the *dalewa lagu*, the first of the two farewell rites of the *dama*. All of their predecessors, the men who presided over the last *dama* thirteen years ago, have owned a special personal stool, the *sigi dalewa*, associated with the *sigi* ritual. Carrying the stools of these men, each of the living elders, in strict order of age, calls upon one deceased, saying, "This is the end now, it is finished with you here, be gentle and have peace." With a powerful blow he shatters first the stool, then a chicken on the altar. Leaving the dead chickens there, the men gather the fragments

of the stools and throw them away in one of the deep crevasses of the scree, abandoned and never referred to again. Before leaving the grounds, each of the old men touches the *dani* with his right hand, calling out the name of one of the dead predecessors, and then one of them uproots the pole and puts it back in the cavern in the village, where all the *dani* are kept.

The Public Performances

The next morning is the day of *yenu kedyè*, "meeting the foreigners," the start of the truly public dances. From the early morning of May 17 on, the masks dance at the various *tei* of the village, the dancing squares on the scree. Throughout the day they visit the compounds of the men who have died since the last *dama*, and greet the dead by dancing on their roofs; afterward the dancers are honored with huge quantities of beer. Then they dress again, unite in groups of six to a dozen, and perform again at the *tei*. In the afternoon, when all the dead have been greeted, the masks converge upon the central *tei*, where the whole village and numerous guests await their arrival. Accompanied by drums and bells, group after group performs, the same dances as always.

Toward five, many of the guests from the other villages gather at the compounds of their Amani friends, especially those whose mothers have come from one of the neighboring villages. For the guests, this finishes the proceedings of the day, but for the people most closely involved in the *dama* one important ritual awaits: the *geà budyu*, "pour the black." At the central *tei*, relatives of all the men who have died since the last *dama* gather, each with two small jars of beer and two tiny empty cups. As one of the leading elders pours beer into each cup, he also pours a good part on the ground as a libation: "This is for you, this is for you, it is finished now." The rest of the beer is poured into a large jar, an action called "gathering the huts," and all present—only males of the village



Fig. 9. The masks are thanked and blessed by the village speaker. After their performance at the first great entry, they gather at the dancing-ground altar, crouching to receive their praise. Yédyè, the ritual speaker of Amani, addresses them in a long invocation, spoken at full voice: "God, thank you, it all depends on you. This is not a thing of ourselves, but a thing of old, a thing found. You have danced well, this we could not do, it is the force of the village that could dance. May God bless you, give you many children." At intervals, the dancers stand up, wave their horsetails, and shout the mask cry: "Hé hé hé." The speech is made long by many repetitions, as ritual speech should be, and is entirely in *sigi so*, the ritual language of the Dogon.

—quietly drink it. People from neighboring villages are definitely excluded from this part of the ritual. Thus all the deceased have been told their farewell, and the second funeral as such is over.

During the next day, May 18, 1989, the masks draw the largest crowds of the whole festival, for once all the major rituals are over, women as well as men from other villages are free to enter the village of the masks. Gradually throughout the day, thousands of people gather in the immediate vicinity of the large *tei*, where from the late morning the masks have performed in small groups. All the rocks and roofs are crammed with well-dressed people, eager to watch the final dance. The women have come closer now, just a few rooftops away, while the young children sneak through the throngs of spectators to catch a close glimpse. Yet the ever attentive *waru* mask continues to chase them away. When the shadows of the cliff arrive at the dancing square, the delegation from the neighboring village of Tireli arrives with their hourglass drums and dancers and one mask, ushered in by one of the masks of Amani. The Tireli men dance into the square, some of them joining the musicians on drums and bells. When they are finished, the Amani

speaker thanks them in *sigi so* for supporting the *dama*. After the polite reply from the Tireli delegation, Yédyè invites the guests to beer. They all sit down and drink, as described in the introduction.

During the following days the *dama* tapers down. A few masks with drummers visit the outlying parts of the village, and later walk all the way to a village in the plains, settled also by descendants of Amani. Before they leave the old men gather at the *tei* and sing some of the mask songs, ending the *dama*, as the ritual is now transferred to other villages.⁴

Things from the Bush: Toward an Interpretation of the *Dama*

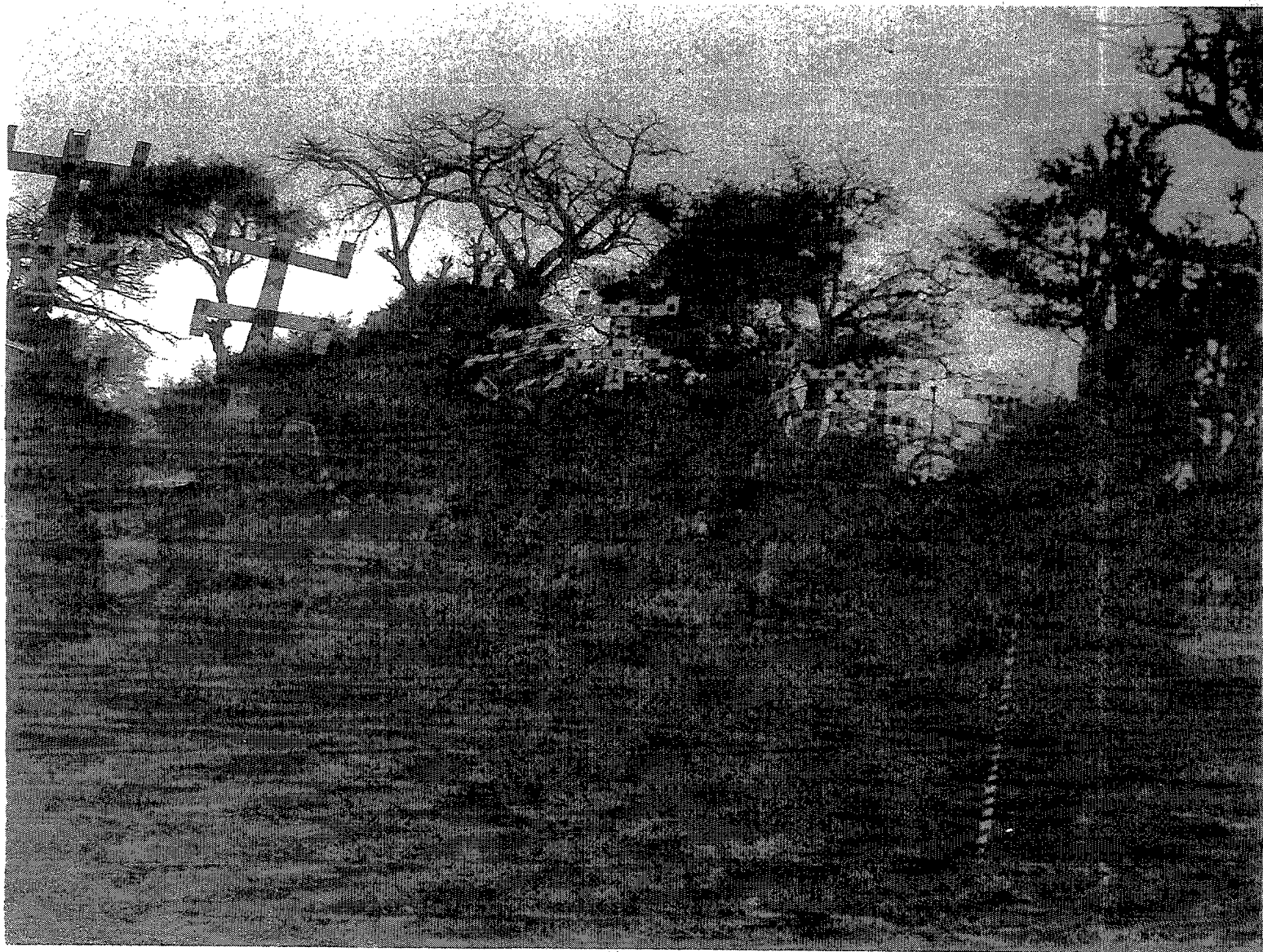
Dogon mask rituals can be approached in many ways, but a crucial element is the relation between men and women. Throughout the mask festival, as we have seen, expressions of male superiority abound—in speech ("Hit the women"), in the behavior of the masks, and in the symbolism of the mask outfits and paraphernalia. Of obvious significance are the sticks the masks carry when entering the village: short sticks with rounded tops, to be used for beating women. And the central taboo of the masks concerns women: women may not

Fig. 10. The line of *kanaga* arrives at the dancing ground, flanked by a *waru*, the antelope, who clears their path by chasing away uninitiated spectators—young children and women. The *kanaga* are the first to emerge from the bush, their height making them visible from a good distance away. The part of the *dama* shown here, the descent from the plains, is the second great entry of the masks. The village is visited by the bush in its full splendor and diversity, the source of power and wisdom, health and fertility. This is a spectacle for the living as well as for the dead. Not only is the village reinvigorated with power, but the deceased are integrated with the bush, their ultimate destination.

come into close contact with any part of the mask, whether head-piece, paraphernalia, or especially the red fibers. Women are not supposed to know that the masks are costumed men; though of course they are perfectly aware, not only that men are inside the masks, but also who the men are. Women are not supposed to comprehend the mask language of *sigi so*; though of course they do, and women who are "sisters of the mask" understand the language without receiving any special instruction (see fig. 1 for such a *yasigine*). The myth of the masks' origin (see also Griaule 1938) describes a balance between men and women. In that tale, the masks—which came from the *yènèù*, the bush spirits—were first found by a woman, who donned this new outfit

and terrified her husband. After some time an old woman told him where the mask could be found. Then he made himself into a mask and used it to dominate his wife, and since that time, men wear the masks, and use them to control women. This is evident outside the context of the *dama* proper, in the corrective ritual called the *puro* (van Beek and Banga 1990), where the collective errors of wayward women are "punished" by a great show of anger from the masks.

The balancing male taboo is against menstrual blood and menstruation as such, and, in a more general way, against any show of female genitalia. A relationship has often been posited between the red fibers and menstrual blood, and though that connection could not be verified in



the field, it may nevertheless reflect Dogon thinking. And whether one makes this association or not, the masks themselves, with their headpieces, fibers, and paraphernalia, show a trend toward the female gender: pointed breasts, skirts, maybe the red color, and jewelry all point toward a feminization of the men. By no means does this happen only in the mask festival. In the yearly ritual held just before the rainy season, the *buro*, the young men deck themselves out in female jewelry, and plait their hair as young girls do. The same thing can be seen in the *sigi* festival (Dieterlen and Rouché 1971), where a feminization of performing males is again evident. The *sigi*, described in detail in Griaule (1938), is as male centered as any of the mask rituals, and should be considered in conjunction with them.

When we consider the intent of the rituals, the meaning of male feminization becomes clear: in their intended effects, both *sigi* and *dama* address fertility. After a *dama*, crops should be abundant, whereas the *sigi* should lead to numerous offspring, guaranteeing a splendid new generation. In both instances the women are absent, and the men do the performing. In both instances the disguised or ornamented collectivity of men suffices to guarantee fertility, be it agricultural or human. Combined with the male taboos against menstruation and menstrual blood (the cessation of female fertility), the host of medicines to cure overdue menses (van Beek 1990), and the shame men experience when confronted with blatant female sexuality, this suggests that the whole mask and *sigi* complex may be seen as a male appropriation of fertility, in which the role of women is ritually marginalized, and men, by transforming themselves, become self-sufficient in procreation. In the masks, men claim to control the sources of fertility, of power, of life.

The question then arises as to whence the men derive their powers. The answer, I would argue, is that power comes from the bush;

the masks represent the bush coming into the village. For the Dogon the category *oru*, the bush, contrasts sharply with *ana*, the village. The notion of *oru* bears very complex connotations. On the one hand the bush is dangerous: no one will ever venture to sleep in it, without the protection of huts or people. Several types of spirits roam the bush and may attack people or exchange body parts with them. One often-voiced fear is that spirits will exchange eyes with humans and render them blind. On the other hand, from the *oru* stem all wisdom, knowledge, power, and life. The bush is the *fons et origo* of everything that makes life possible. The animals of the bush, for example, have a perfect awareness of what humans are up to, of their intentions, mistakes, transgressions, and frailties, and know what the future holds for humans (van Beek and Banga 1990). And according to the founding myths of the mask and *sigi* complex, these rituals originated with the spirits of the bush and its animals: the masks began as a gift from the *yènèu* to the *kei*, the black ants, who were the first to dance in masks. From them, the masks were stolen by a bird, who dropped them near a human settlement in Yougo, where a woman found them.

The masks, then, are essentially bush things, representing the power and the wisdom of the bush. The most important rituals in the *dama*, as we have seen, are usually the coming of the masks, their arrival at the village from the bush. Starting out first from the "east," i.e., from the direction of Yougo, where the masks originated, the masks arrive "naked," clothed only in untinted fibers. Later they arrive in their complete outfit, this time from the plains, from the bush, where the spirits dwell. And at the end of the festival they leave toward the "west" for the next village, and finally for the bush again, back to the place of origin. So knowledge of the masks is transferred from village to village, in an "east-west" direction, while the masks them-



Fig. 11. Alei Pudyugo accosted by a mask, which may punish people for perceived transgressions. As a Christian, Alei Pudyugo declined to participate in the Amani *dama*. Other men of his age, however, some of them also Christians, did dress as masks, wearing at first just a few fibers and a *bèdyè* mask on the tops of their heads. When a group of them came across Alei Pudyugo one evening, they went for him. Brandishing their sticks and lashes, they silently danced before him, whipping at him, separating him from the others, cornering him. They never said a word nor uttered a sound, even when Alei addressed them in *sigi so*. Only when he took up a stick and danced with them did they relent. But silence reigned throughout: masks do not speak, even if barely disguised.



Fig. 12. The *sadimbe* or "great woman" points back to the masks' origin. According to the myth, the masks were created by the bush spirits, given to the *kei*, the black ants, then stolen by the buzzard, to be found finally by a woman in Yougo, a village at the cliff. The woman dressed in the mask and scared her husband, who did not realize that the mask was his wife in disguise. After an old woman told him

where to find the costume, however, he donned it himself and scared his wife. Since then, men use the masks. The *sadimbe* mask depicts this first woman, dressed and adorned as one of the *yasigine*—the sisters of the masks, a group of women, all born during the *sigi* ritual, who perform some tasks in the mask festival, such as giving the masks beer and water in their hideout in the bush.

selves in their completeness come and go between village and the bush, i.e., "north-south."

One central argument for this interpretation is language. First of all, the masks do not speak: they only shout a meaningless, high-pitched cry. Even when the wearer of the fibers is unadorned, he is forbidden to speak (fig. 11). The importance of the spoken word is central in the Dogon definition of a human being (Calame-Griaule 1965); speaking is human, silence is bush. Whoever can speak Dogon is Dogon (van Beek 1983). Characteristically, the masks are never addressed or exhorted in Dogon; they are spoken to only in *sigi so*. Some specific features of the ritual language are revealing. As a derivative language, *sigi so* has a 20 percent overlap with Dogon, and a simple syntax (Leiris 1948). More important, it never appears in a two-way communication. It is used to recite long texts, and to exhort or to greet masks; never is any answer given to the quite standardized expressions. And *sigi so* is actually seldom spoken, but nearly always shouted, at the top of the voice, even when the recipient mask is quite close. In essence, *sigi so* implies a form of linguistic noncommunication. When the masks are addressed, they are spoken to as people speak to animals, without expecting any response, and shouting as if at a distance. Besides, the founding myth of *sigi so* explicitly states that the language derives from the bush, from the *dynu*, the bush spirits, who taught the first *sigi* initiate.

So masks enact the bush endowing the village with power and fertility. Incorporating the power of the bush, the men try to guarantee life for the village, rejecting the women as such but embracing their symbolic identity, in dress and adornment as well as in masks. Thus the "great woman" mask (*emna sadimbe*) may be viewed as a metaphor of the *dama*, a man disguised as the woman who first danced the mask (fig. 12). The situation is fraught with dialectics: as a male

means to appropriate fertility, the masks are a threat to actual female fertility; touching a mask may render a woman sterile. Male ritual power, thus, is as ambivalent as the bush itself, powerful but also dangerous, at the same time guaranteeing and threatening the continued existence of the village. This dialectic is highlighted by the fact that this male empowerment is part of a death ritual, a farewell from the old men, a theater for the deceased. Male ritual fertility is associated with death as well as with life.

If masks are "things coming from the bush," what then do the individual masks represent? Two central Dogon ritual masks, the *bèdyè* and the *adyagai*, the "red thing," represent the bush as such: they are simple hoods, unornamented but for two, four, six, or more eyes. Informants agree on the fact that the earliest "original" masks that came from Yougo are these plaited hoods. *Bèdyè* means pupil, while *adyagai* is the name of a red stinging insect that descends on the millet (fig. 13). Both masks are the epitome of "things from the bush," unrecognizable, knowing and seeing, dangerous and powerful. In the same league, in their own way, are the antelope, the monkey, and the one mask that depicts elements from the mask myths, the *sadimbe*, the woman who originally found the masks.

A large category of masks represents bush animals: buffalo, antelope, waterbird (stilts), hare, hyena, leopard, elephant. The *kanaga* too are probably storks, though this original symbolism has been somewhat lost. Perhaps the long tree mask is of the same category, though it is harder to interpret; the explanation of "two-story house" is often given as well. Finally, there are human beings more or less associated with the bush, like the hunter. In Dogon culture, hunting is a bridge between the bush and the village, and the hunter is someone from the bush. His mask vividly expresses this attitude: a fierce countenance, with large protruding teeth and a

bulging forehead (fig. 14), reshapes the figure into a nondomesticated human (Pern, Alexander, and van Beek 1982:120, Griaule 1938:318). Other masks of this type stress the relationships between bush and village. One of them is the *binugèdyu*, the shaman, another intermediary between the two, and between men and spirits. The mask of the *dyodyongunu*, the healer,⁵ has similar features: human and more than human, carrying four figurines on his head. He too is an intermediary, since health is thought to stem from the bush. Also important in this respect are the masks of women, like the Dogon or the Bambara girls. Though of course very human, they represent primarily unmarried women, and as such depict a segment of Dogon life somewhat associated with the bush. For though the contrast between men and women and that between village and bush does not run wholly parallel, there is some association of women with the bush and of men with the village.

The *Dama* in Change

As a core ritual for the Dogon, the *dama* reflects the changes that bear upon the society. Timing is one of these. The *dama* is held much later in the season than formerly; the intensification of dry-season cultivation has seen to that. Whereas formerly the *dama* was held in the cooler, drier months of January or February, now late April is normal for the start. This is the time of the *buro*, the yearly ritual marking the onset of the rains and cultivation, and the danger of rain falling on the masks—a very strict taboo—adds to the elders' worries. Timing has changed in other ways as well. The young men of today often have to return from far away to participate in the masquerade. The Dogon have known migration of labor for at least two generations. But the scale is different now. It has become an established phase in the life of Dogon youth to get out, earn money, and come back. The youngsters being initiated tend to be older nowadays.



Fig. 13. Together with the *bèdyè* mask, the *adyagai* is at the same time one of the simplest and most central masks of the Dogon. In an unspecified way, it represents the essential bush, for though the name *adyagai* refers to a stinging red bush insect, it is clear that the mask's reference is much wider: the bush as such. Whenever a single mask performs in a ritual, it is an *adyagai*. At the first funeral of an old man, for instance, this mask dances on his roof, and takes a brass ring serving as a personal "altar" into the bush. When the dancing pole was planted in the Amani *dama*, an *adyagai* danced around it first, sounding a bull-roarer, and when the trail to all the ritual places had to be established for the remainder of the masks, an *adyagai* scouted it. The mask's main features are its many eyes, symbols of knowledge and power, and a central aspect of all masks.

The masks too have changed, and the festival with them. Comparing the older data (Griaule 1938) and informants' statements about the past with present-day mask performances, one sees new masks joining the troupe, and old types, like the elephant mask, dropping out as people lose interest in them. But most masks survive. Dogon masks form an open system with a historic accumulation: new masks come in, some masks are marginalized, but most of the old ones remain. Consequently, beyond the bush symbolism, new ways of interpreting the world emerge in the masks, including political ideas, and the expression of individuality.

During the last century the Dogon have been increasingly drawn into a wider world, and have invariably found themselves at the bottom of the political scale. The new power-holders have been depicted in masks, but differently from the bush: not as all-wise sources of fertility, but as all-too-human aliens of strange appearance and weird behavior. Masks of Fulani women, Mossi horsemen, or a Sawo warrior are examples of this. The threat of these characters is no longer vague and spiritual but concrete and physical. As their power brings nothing of real value, their political dominance can be offset by subjecting them to ridicule. These powerful outsiders are the laughing stock of the Dogon spectators: the Fulani woman hops around the square in her dance, trying to sweep up cattle droppings, while her husband may fall off his wooden horse.

In a similar vein, two more recent types of masks represent strangers coming in from abroad. The first one is the *modibo*, the learned Muslim. The second is the *anyara*, the white man, the European, of which we note three variations. The mask is always clothed in trousers and a shirt, and the head is covered by a huge wooden mask painted a fiery red, with long wavy hair, a wild bristling beard, and a hooked nose. In the first variant, in Griaule's days, a colonial officer was imitated,

writing small bills for the audience, and saluting when he received his "taxes." Now the tourist is imitated: the same mask operates with a wooden "camera," forcing his way through the crowds in order to get a good shot. Especially interesting is the Sanga variation (Griaule 1938: 583), where the white person sits on a chair as two Dogon sit on the floor. Waving a notebook, the "European" asks the silliest questions: the mask of the anthropologist! (figs. 15 and 16). Although the power relation is absent, the same kind of ridicule holds for the *odyogoro*, the mask with a huge wooden goiter who mimics the difficulties a goiter sufferer has in cultivating crops.

Performance, the quality of dancing, weighs especially heavily with this kind of mask. More than the others, these masks are spectator oriented and interact with the audience. The enrichment of the spectacle of the *dama* has probably heightened competition among the dancers; Dogon daily life offers few arenas for individual excellence, which in any event is mistrusted in Dogon culture. The *dama* is a venue for (limited) social prestige, and a tendency to lessen the anonymity of the masks has emerged in it: today's *kanaga* may bear the written name of its owner. In this regard, of course, schooling makes itself felt as well, as it stimulates both individual expression and writing. The fact that the dancers tend to be older today also has an effect here.

Tourism, another factor in Dogon country, has led to a proliferation of masks. The number of masks per person has increased dramatically, with each dancer making at least two or three headpieces beyond the *bedyè* to sell to tourists. In principle, this does not present a problem, as masks have always been discarded after their use in the *dama* for which they are made. Old masks have significance not for the Dogon but for art dealers. The village has to retain enough masks to dance at funerals, however. More masks are also made as tourists demand more mask performances.

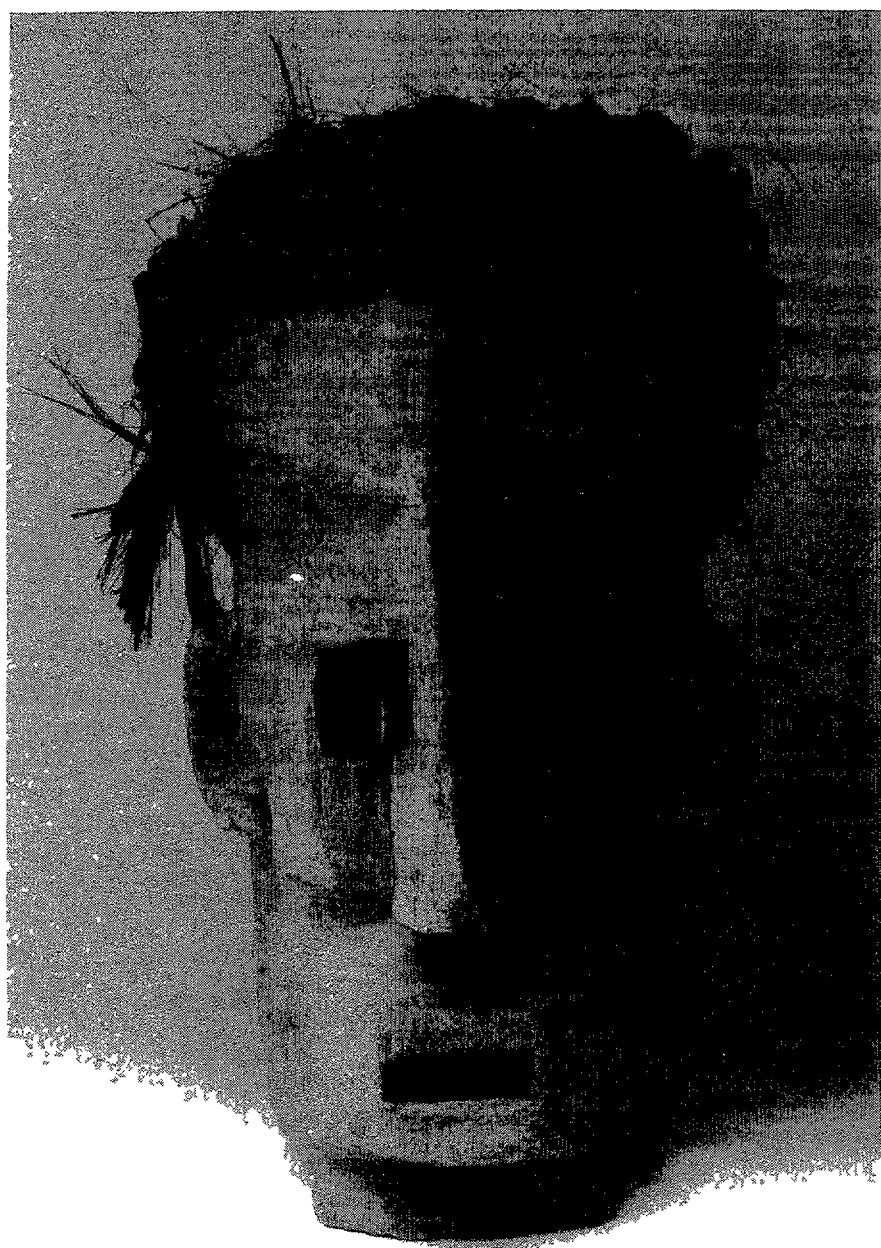


Fig. 14. A "hunter" mask, *emna dana*, portraying the fierce bushman any successful hunter must be. For the Dogon, hunting is essentially a magical skill. Game animals, as part of the powerful bush, cannot be hunted by a "simple person" without magic, as they would know everything about their pursuer. The game must be overpowered by magical means. Thus a hunter has to be both a magician and a "bushy" person: a character between bush and village, an intermediary between power and man. The fierceness of his countenance, with its bulging forehead and protruding teeth, reflects just that. The dance of this mask often involves a challenge between the hunter mask and an old hunter from the audience. Both go through the same paces, the old man mimicking any move of the mask.

New masks also emerge, quite rapidly, with an eye for sales. In the Amani *dama* two of them surfaced, a mask of a sheep and one of a door. One had the impression that some Bambara masks may have influenced the maker of the sheep mask, who happens to have worked in Abidjan as well as in Bamako. The door mask was quite traditional in its figuration—a straightforward plank with a number of stylized figurines—but the colors were not traditional at all. In this change, the masks have come almost full circle: from the bush, they have "come home," depicting domestic things,⁶ a change one might call

their "domestication."

On the other hand, the performance of mask dances for tourists, as done in Sanga and several surrounding villages, strengthens the importance of performance, the men taking pride in a really good dance (Lane 1988). These tourist performances recreate the conditions of the public dances in the third phase of the *dama*. Their frequency in and around Sanga has brought some cognitive dissociation between the *dama* as a ritual and as a performance for outsiders; the dancers speak about them as two quite distinct events. Tourism, however, has definitely boosted Dogon pride in



Figs. 15 and 16. The mask of a European. A fairly new mask, the *emna anyara* was used in the days before independence to depict colonial officers writing out tax bills and taking in money. Later, when tourism developed among the Dogon, this mask, clad in European-type trousers, came brandishing a camera, annoying everyone as he tried to get a good shot of the proceedings

—the tourist. A very special third version, seen here, portrays a European sitting on a chair with two Dogon sitting on the floor next to him. The “white” man (the mask is in fact painted a fiery red) makes notes, and asks the silliest questions: the anthropologist. This one portrays the author (fig. 16).



their masks, both as artifacts and as performance.

Religion, of course, is a crucial factor. The roots of the *dama* lie in traditional Dogon religion, and consequently religious change is of prime importance to it. Both Islam and the usual variants of Christianity are well established in Dogon society. In principle, in fact, the villages away from the cliff are either Christian or Muslim. The rituals described are linked to the core area of the Dogon, the escarpment, but in these villages too, both religions have made their inroads. There, too, a growing part of the population no longer performs sacrifices (the Dogon definition of the practice of their traditional religion). Still, even in the cliff villages with a majority of Muslims, such as Sanga, the masks still dance and the *dama* is still held. When the more performative aspects of the festival are highlighted, integration with the new religion becomes less problematic.

In a way, this whole pattern of change fits in well with Dogon culture in general. The Dogon show a high level of cultural pride, and in no way consider themselves a cultural minority. They have a clear idea of the value of their own traditions, and understand the need to retain the old while embracing the new. The masks may ridicule power, albeit the human variant, in their treatment of white men, but this ritual of rebellion has a mildness that seems to stem from a high self-esteem, a gentleness that fits well into Dogon culture. A chuckle is what the holders of power deserve, and never are they truly shamed. The masks' behavior allows the people portrayed to retain some of their dignity, while the legitimacy of their power is never questioned. Shame or loss of face (*dogo*) would be much more devastating, especially in Dogon eyes (van Beek 1983), but the Dogon feel secure enough in their own culture to be content with a slightly condescending amusement. Many changes have come to the

mask festival by addition, as more new masks have emerged than old ones have disappeared, and elements of performance and ridicule have been added to fertility rites. The Dogon do have a way of fitting new elements into their existing cultural patterns: new etiological tales are joined with the traditional myths, new divination techniques supplement old ones (van Beek 1991), new material objects are joined with artisanal techniques (van Beek 1983), and new relations with outsiders are incorporated into existing social networks. Then the new elements become "traditional," meaning they are quickly considered as *tèm*, "found," and the difference between the recent innovation and the old legacy gets blurred. The old masks function at the core of the ritual alongside a growing contingent of new ones, for which the religious function is less dominant. So, adding on new elements to the masquerade, the Dogon enlarge the range of the *dama* without deleting the ritual as such. Rituals of rebellion, individual performances, and sales to outsiders notwithstanding, the masks still emerge powerful from the bush, scare the women, and endorse the men with the power over life and death, at least for one unforgettable month each dozen years.

NOTES

1. The Dogon would define this as "east." Living at the foot of the cliff, they conceive its direction as east-west; according to them, the sun rises and sets parallel to the cliff. The geographic direction is actually more northeast-southwest.
2. The roan and sable antelopes designated in the literature as *Hippotragus equinus* or *niger* (Dieterlen 1990, Griaule 1938) are identified by my informants with the Dogon name *kaí*.
3. The same reasoning may explain why in some villages the masks dance a serpentine trail, so that an enemy cannot count them.
4. The rainy season of 1989 was very good, and the crops were abundant in the

fields. At the end of September, however, a cloud of locusts descended on the Dogon area, devouring the crops that had been so assiduously danced for.

5. This is the mask identified by Dieterlen as Dyongou Serou, a presumed ancestor. As indicated elsewhere (van Beek 1991), this interpretation is not correct.

6. The *èmna na*, a mask carved in the form of a cow, in fact represents a wild buffalo, *oru na*, like *Connochaetus* or *Damascalis*.

GLOSSARY

Agamagâ	Grand mask.
Ana	Village.
Anyara	White man.
Binugèdyu	Shaman.
Buro	Rain ritual.
Dalewa lagu	"Beat the stool," farewell ritual.
Dama	Mask festival, "taboo."
Dani	Dancing pole.
Dogo	Shame or loss of face.
Dyinu	Bush spirit.
Dyodyongunu	Healer.
Èmna	Mask.
Èmna adyagai	"Red thing."
Èmna bèdyè	Pupil mask.
Èmna binu	Shaman's mask.
Èmna goû	Hare or rabbit mask.
Èmna kanaga	Stork mask.
Èmna-modibo	Muslim officiant mask.
Èmna na	Bull-roarer mask.
Èmna odyogoro	Goiter mask.
Èmna pulo	Fulani mask.
Èmna sadimbe	"Sister-of-the-masks" mask.
Èmna tá	Door mask.
Èmna tingetange	Stilts; waterbird mask.
Èmna tiû	Tree or big house mask.
Èmna waru	Antelope mask.
Gèû budyu	"Pour the black," farewell rite.
Kei	Black ants.
Manugosugo	Descent from the plains, last major entrance into the village.
Oru	Bush.
Orubaru	Sigi officiator.
Puro	Corrective (mask) ritual.
Sagatara	Strong young man.
Sigi	Sixty-year ritual.
Sigi dalewa	Sigi stool.
Sigi so	Ritual language.
Tei	Public square in the village.
Tèm	Found.
Yange èmna	Fire masks, the first part of the mask festival.
Yasigine	Sister of the masks.
Yenèû	Bush spirits.
Yenu kèdyè	"Meeting the foreigners": public mask dance.

the original was in a foreign language. Unless otherwise noted, translations have been made by the authors and editors of the essays in this book.

Legends written by the artist on artworks have been treated as titles, and where works of art have been given a name by the artist, that name has generally been given in the original language, accompanied by an English translation, if necessary, in parentheses; but in the interest of brevity, only translations have been given for the names of some of the works illustrating the essays.

Unless otherwise noted, the place names referred to in the book are the current ones, even though at the time of the events discussed other names may have been in use. With respect to the names of persons, the sequence of given name and family name varies from place to place in Africa; in some areas, the family name normally precedes the given name.

Publication director: Stephen Benjamin

Text editor: David Frankel

Design: Kiyoshi Kanai, Inc.

Typesetting: U.S. Lithograph, typographers, New York

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New York, NY 10021

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Library of Congress catalogue card no. 90-26683

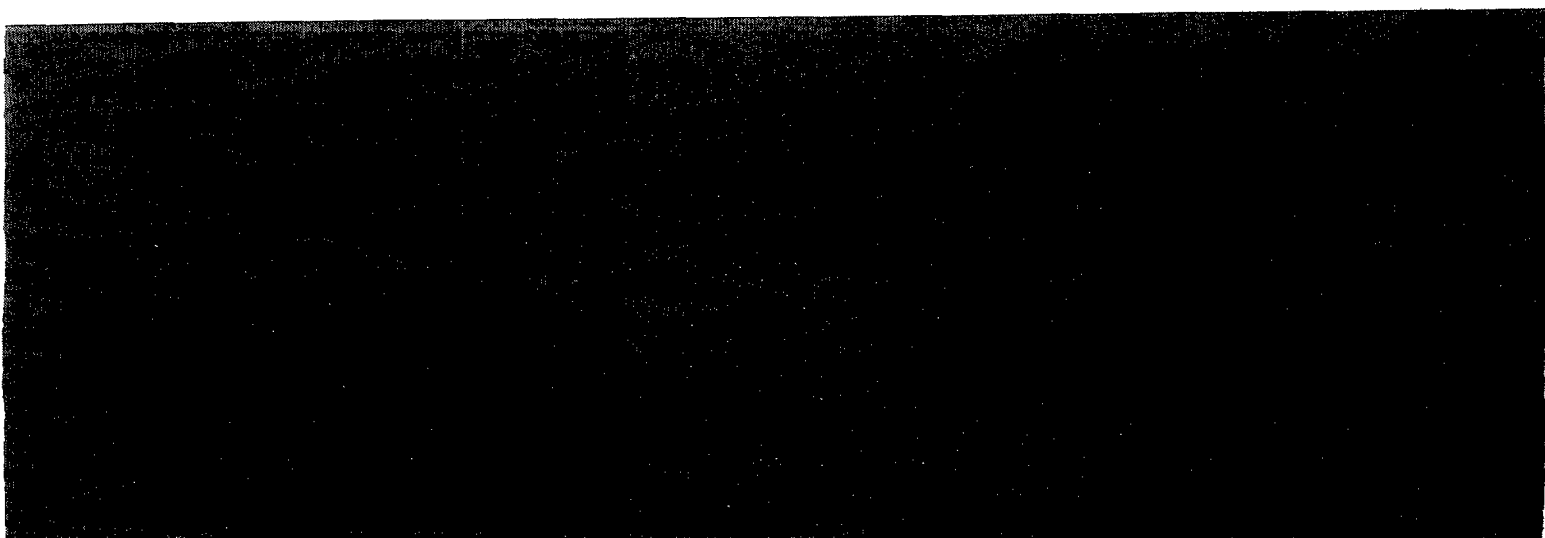
Clothbound ISBN 3-7913-1143-3

Paperbound ISBN 0-945802-09-9

Front cover: all illustrations are from the catalogue.

Back cover: cat. 39.

Printed and bound in Japan.



' for Arnold Rubin

AFRICA EXPLORES: 20th Century African Art is published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title organized and presented by The Center for African Art, New York.

The exhibition is supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Rockefeller Foundation, the New York State Council on the Arts, the City of New York Department of Cultural Affairs, the Forbes Foundation, the Aaron Diamond Foundation, the Anne S. Richardson Fund, and the Andy Warhol Foundation.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Quoted passages from books and articles have generally been given in English even if the original was in a foreign language. Unless otherwise noted, translations have been made by the authors and editors of the essays in this book.

Legends written by the artist on artworks have been treated as titles, and where works of art have been given a name by the artist, that name has generally been given in the original language, accompanied by an English translation, if necessary, in parentheses; but in the interest of brevity, only translations have been given for the names of some of the works illustrating the essays.

Unless otherwise noted, the place names referred to in the book are the current ones, even though at the time of the events discussed other names may have been in use. With respect to the names of persons, the sequence of given name and family name varies from place to place in Africa; in some areas, the family name normally precedes the given name.

Publication director: Stephen Benjamin

Text editor: David Frankel

Design: Kiyoshi Kanai, Inc.

Typesetting: U.S. Lithograph, typographers, New York

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